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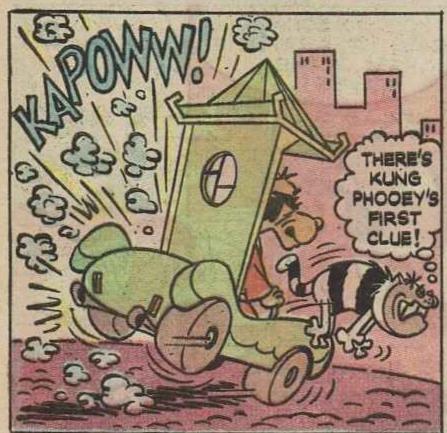








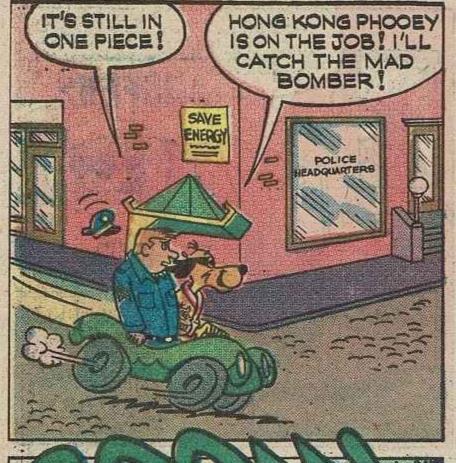
























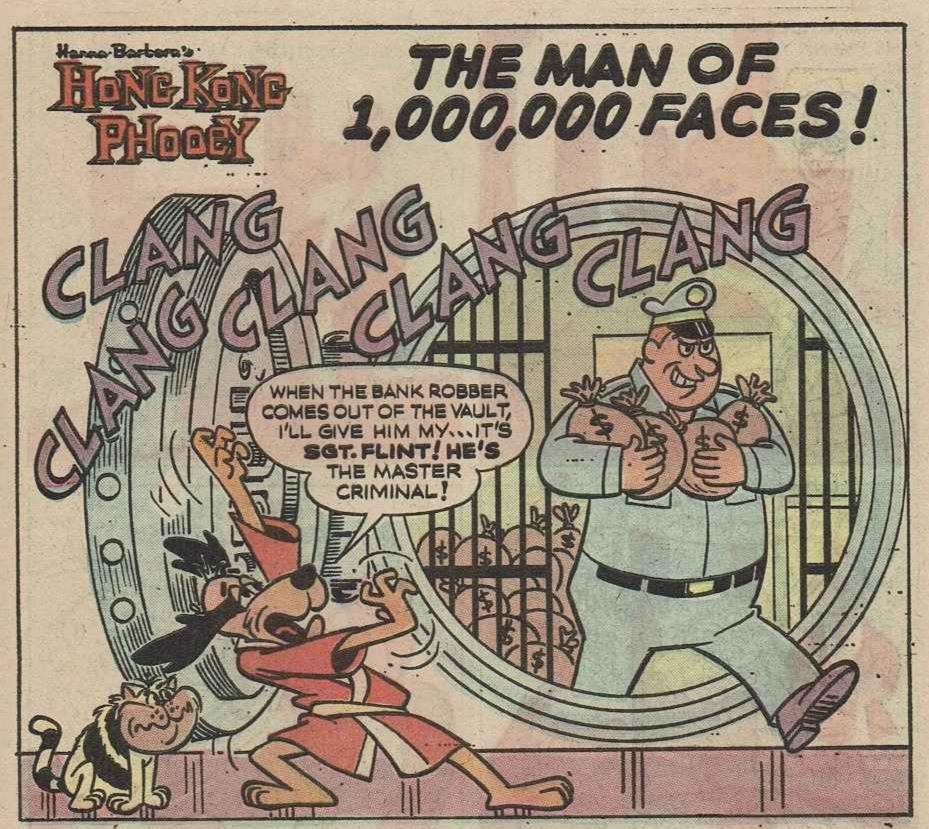












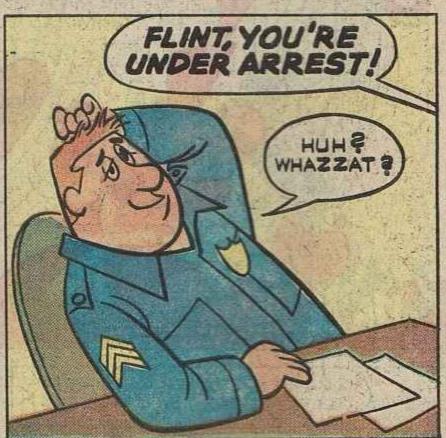


























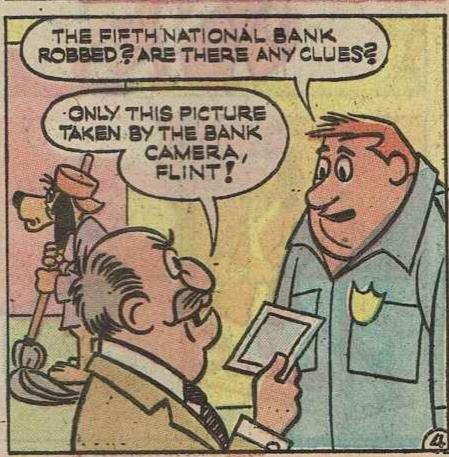


















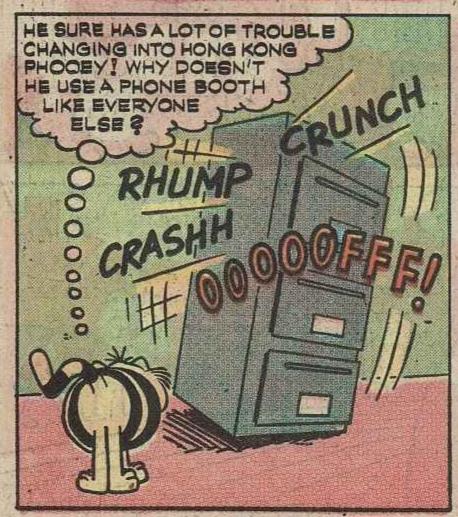


















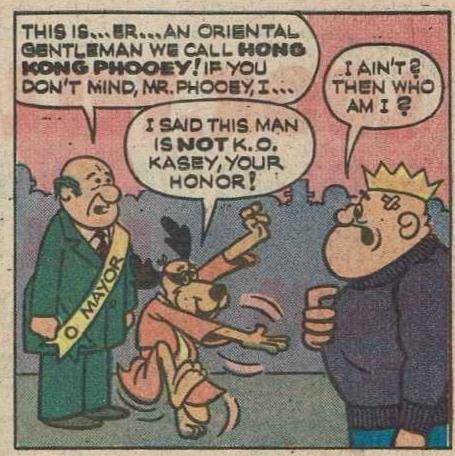










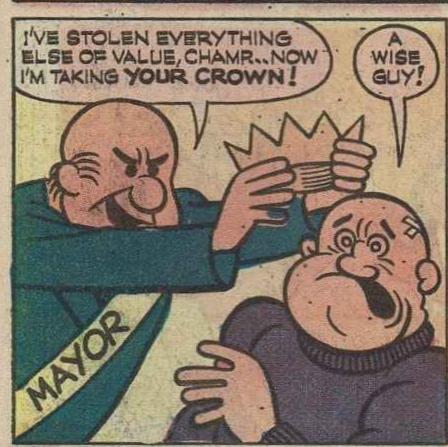




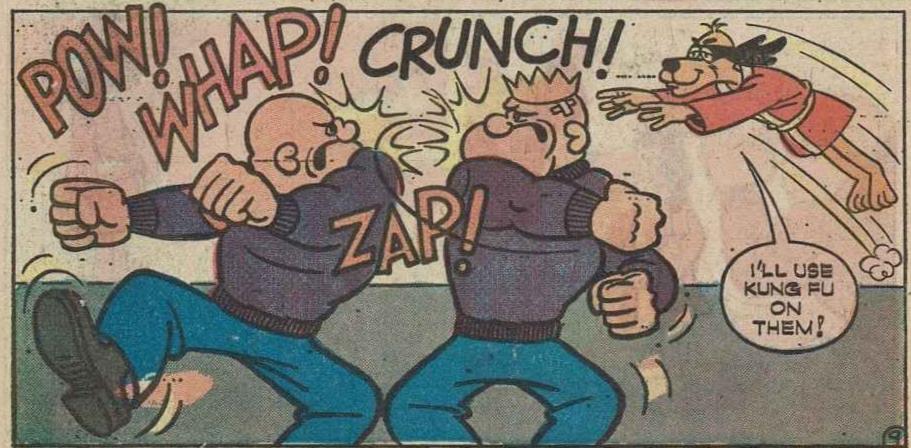






















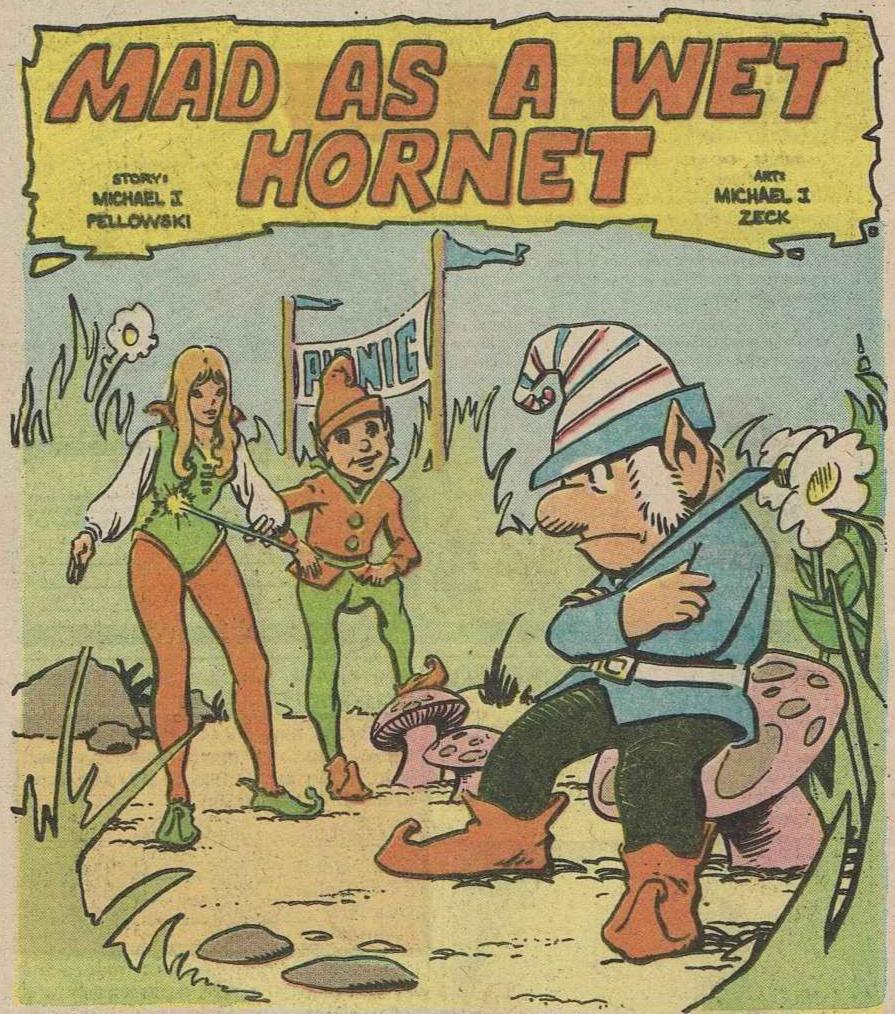












tak the Elf grumbled to himself as he marched down the path. The path led through the enchanted woods and into the grove of trees that the elves always used for their annual picnic. Lok didn't like picnics or celebrations. He liked to be by himself. He wasn't as noisy or impish as the other elves who lived in the enchanted forest. It didn't matter to him that today was the day the "203rd Annual Elves' Picnic" was to be held. He would have liked to stay home. Better yet, he would have liked to go fishing.

It didn't matter what he would have liked to do. He was on his way to the picnic. The Wood Fairy, who was the boss of all the elves, had ordered him to attend. The head elf, Tinker, had warned Lok that the Wood Fairy would be very mad if Lok didn't show up. He was

forced to obey. The Wood Fairy could be very nasty when she was mad. Lok didn't want to make her angry and suffer the consequences.

"The dumb picnic is a silly celebration! Who cares about having fun!" multered Lok as he stomped through a bed of wild flowers. When he reached the picnic grounds, all of the other elves were already there. Tinker, the head elf, and the beautiful Weed Fairy immediately came over to great him. "Well, well, look who's here. Right on time, too!" said Tinker as he looked at the miniature sundial strapped to his wrist. He smiled and shook hands with Lok.

"If I'm not mistaken, this is the first elves' plants you've come to in a hundred and ninety-three years!" added Tinker. "It's a hundred and ninety-five years!" answered Lok correcting Tinker's mistake. "Smile. Lak!" ordered the Wood Fairy as she noticed that Lok was frowning. Lok tried to smile but just couldn't do it. The muscles of his face twitched but his lips refused to curl up into a smile. "See what happens when you are a grumpy elf for a hundred and ninety-five years! You couldn't smile if you tried!" scolded the Wood Fairy.

"I want to see you smile before you go home tonight. You always walk around with a frown on your face. You look madder than a wet homet. Relax and have some fun. Smile, and that's an order!" she added as she turned and walked away. Tinker winked at Lok and then followed in the Wood Fairy's footsteps.

Lok was puzzled. He didn't know what to do. He hadn't smiled in a hundred and ninety-five years and, really had forgotten how to do it. He walked over to the edge of a nearby pend. He sat near a tiny, elf fire engine which was parked there. The fire engine was a



safety precaution in the event that a five should accidentally start. All of the other elves were eating up the delicious food the Wood Fairy had magically preduced. The elves were playing badminton, horse shoes and volleyball.

They were having sack races and doing all sorts of silly things to amuse themselves. Everyone was having fun except Lok. Lok was grumpy and so was a nest of homets who lived in a tree above the picnic area. The hernets were even grouchier and grumpier than Lok. They didn't like to see anyone having a good time. All the noise that the elves were making annoyed them. They were mad because they didn't get invited to the celebration. All of the elves and the Wood Fairy were sitting at the picnic table when the angry hornets decided to barge in.

The hornets zoomed down from their nest high up in the tree. They swarmed around the picnic table,



around the elves and around the Wood Fairy. They knocked the Fairy's magic wand out of her hand and she was helpless. The elves and the homets started to fight. They threw pies at each other and made a terrible mess. The picnic turned into a free-for-all. Tinker, the head elf, get hit right in the face with a blueberry pie.

"Somebody do something to stop this!" shouted the Fairy. Lok hopped onto his feet. He picked up the fire engine's water hose. He turned on the water. He sprayed everyone in the picnic area, including the Wood Fairy. The cold water cooled everyone off, including the hornets. Everyone stopped fighting and started laughing. When Lok saw how funny the dripping wet Wood Fairy and the pie-faced Tinker looked, he laughed the loudest he'd laughed in a hundred and ninety-five years. The Wood Fairy frowned. "Well at least you're smiling!" she said to Lok.



